

## **SPECIAL DISTRICTS**

**Honey Lake Community TV Corporation  
Lassen Municipal Utility District  
Susanville Library District**

# **HONEY LAKE COMMUNITY TV CORPORATION**

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**Response Required:** None

**Reason for Inquiry:** As part of the required duties the Grand Jury periodically reviews agencies which receive funds through the County Tax Collection procedures. This year we reviewed the Honey Lake Community TV Corporation.

The Honey Lake Community TV Corporation was founded in the early 1960's as a non-profit organization with the goal of bringing improved television reception to the citizens of Susanville and the entire Honey Lake Valley region. This goal was achieved through the placement of receivers and repeaters on two mountain peaks near the valley. The organization has a board of directors and two technical employees who work on an on-call basis for repairs or new equipment installation.

**Findings:** (1) Funding for the organization (HLCTV) is done through tax collections and all income and expenditures are accounted for through the Lassen County Auditor's Office. (2) The HLCTV Corp is currently working to construct a new building to house equipment on their primary mount facility. The new building is larger and better insulated to protect and keep equipment inside at cooler temperatures. (3) The HLCTV Corp is also in the process of getting translators and relays to handle digital signals as well as analog signals. This should improve reception quality. (4) The HLCTV Corp is also currently working to improve the reliability of the generator used on Black's Mountain to prevent future outage problems.

**Recommendations:** The Grand Jury finds that Honey Lake T.V. Corp provides a valuable public service. Those in rural areas are especially well served. The HLCTV Corp is to be commended for continuing to provide service to the community at an extremely affordable price, and for its willingness to improve its equipment to meet new technologies.

# **LASSEN MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT**

## LMUD

**Response Required:** None

**Reason for Inquiry:** The 2003/04 Grand Jury felt that it would be appropriate to observe the operations of the Lassen Municipal Utility District and the LMUD Board meetings. After the Grand Jury had begun its inquiries there was one complaint filed with the 2003/04 Grand Jury.

**Findings:** Inquiries, interviews and investigations were made via Board Member, public and employees of LMUD.

Several Jury members attended LMUD Board Meetings throughout the year observe Board actions and operations, also the actions of the members of the public in attendance, concerned citizens, rate payers, individual activists and local activist groups.

The Board meetings were held in a professional manner despite numerous attempts to disrupt the meetings, and to demean the Board members and Management staff. All Board members seemed well prepared and involved in the utilities operations. Ms. Twitchell as the CEO was well organized and presented the agenda items in a most efficient and knowledgeable manner.

LMUD has had consistent and substantial additional legal costs (\$141,380 and \$7,728 staff) dealing with the demands and accusations of the activists.

The current LMUD board has hired a qualified full time manager and has approved the hiring of an Electrical Engineer.

LMUD management has developed a maintenance program that is working toward upgrading and maintaining an antiquated system.

To date all investigations have shown that the LMUD Board, Management Staff and Employees are doing a good job for the ratepayers in their service area.

**Recommendations:** That LMUD Board and Management continue to work in an aggressive and professional manner with the foresight to continue to pursue all available sources of electrical power at the most reasonable rates.

That the concerned citizens, ratepayers, individual activists local activist groups should continue to attend the Board meetings. If there are concerns as to some part of the operations, please state clearly the reason for the concerns and your motivations for your

discontent. Above all be proactive, make positive suggestions that will be helpful to the board, and will not result in additional excessive legal cost to the ratepayers. After all it is the **RATEPAYERS** that are LMUD.

**SUSANVILLE LIBRARY DISTRICT**

## SUSANVILLE LIBRARY DISTRICT

**Findings:** The Susanville Library has historically been funded from a number of sources. The State Library System has, in the past, allotted \$28,000.00 a year to the local library. More recently, the State cut this amount by as much as 76%. Last year the library received only \$7,000.00, and this year \$8,000.00 was received. The library also receives funds from the \$28.00 Susanville Residential Fee library assessment, which amounts to approximately \$130,000.00 each year. There are also approximately 130 Lassen County residents who pay the fee and receive household library cards. These fees are not enough to operate the library alone, but they are critical in the augmentation of library operation costs.

Virginia Wilson, PhD, should be commended, along with her staff, which is composed of thirteen part-time employees and nine volunteer employees. Their work includes, but is not limited to, working in the children's center, cataloging books and audio books, recovering existing books, and maintaining the computers. One of the part-time employees has a Masters of Library Science (MLS).

Several grants are alternative sources of funding for the library. The staff applies for approximately twenty grants each year, of which approximately half are awarded to the library. The Wal-Mart Corporation continues to be very helpful in providing funds to the library. Lassen County Board of Supervisor Jim Chapman has been a great help by contributing his discretionary funds. The City of Susanville has also helped by providing maintenance personnel to assist with regular heating, cooling and other maintenance issues.



The operation of the library is on a yearly twenty-six week schedule, operating five days a week, and, on most days, for only four hours a day. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, the library operates on a late schedule of 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Donated books, videos, magazines and audio books are very important to the continued success of the library. Books not kept for library use are sold for a small amount, and the monies are reinvested in the library to purchase new books.

The library has a large conference room that seats approximately twenty people. The public can rent this room for approximately \$10.00 for three hours.

The Susanville library provides internet use through six computers. Internet users are only allowed up to one hour a day, due to high demand. The Susanville library does a good job of monitoring the use of internet access by minors. Minors must first have permission slips signed by a parent or guardian before they are allowed to use the computers, and one parent or guardian must be present when a minor uses the internet. The staff does a good job of monitoring the content while walking around the library.

**Recommendations:**

The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Susanville continue to assist the library in whatever ways it can, whether it is monetary or through use of its maintenance crews.

The County of Lassen should continue to help in whatever way it can, which includes, but is not limited to, Discretionary Funds donated by members of the Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Jim Chapman is a good example for other Board members.

The staff should continue to seek out grants and perform fundraisers to assist in the operational cost of the library.

The city and county elected officials should investigate expanding the residential fee to the county as a whole, to benefit all its citizens. This would allow the library to operate seven days a week, with longer hours each day. The benefit to the community would be immeasurable. Also, the library could hire a full-time librarian, something they currently do not have.